

## What kind of assistance does the Department of Children and Family Services Economic Stability offer?

- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) – Provides assistance to families to help pay for the child care needed in order to work, or attend school or training.
- Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program (FITAP) – Provides temporary cash assistance to eligible low-income families who need assistance for children. FITAP recipients also receive Medicaid benefits through the Department of Health and Hospitals.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly the Food Stamp Program) – Provides monthly benefits that help low-income households buy the food they need for good health.
- Kinship Care Subsidy Program (KCSP) – Provides cash assistance for eligible children who reside with qualified relatives other than parents. KCSP recipients also receive Medicaid benefits through the Department of Health and Hospitals.
- For more information about programs and services or for specific information about your case, call 1-888-LAHELPU (1-888-524-3578).

## Information on Non-Cash Services

Your household may be authorized to receive the following non-cash services. For additional information, please visit our website at [www.dcfslouisiana.gov](http://www.dcfslouisiana.gov) or contact your local DCFS Office.

- **Family Violence Prevention and Intervention Program** - Provides services for victims of domestic violence and their children. Services are limited to children and/or parents/caretaker relatives who are victims of domestic violence. Call 1-888-411-1333.
- **Homeless Initiative** - Provides services to homeless families, including comprehensive case management, educational and employment opportunities for adult participants, community referrals, life skills modules, and housing options. Call 318-221-7887 and 318-807-6200.
- **Individual Development Account (IDA) Program** - Provides asset and savings opportunities to low income working families for specific purposes and provides financial management education. Louisiana's IDA program for home ownership provides a \$4 match for every \$1 that a participant saves (\$1,000 in contributions by the participant equals receipt of \$4,000 in matching funds). Matching funds may only be utilized for the purchase of a family's first home. Visit Louisiana Asset Building Initiative's website at <http://www.subr.edu/ida/> or call 225-771-5454.
- **MICRO-Enterprise Development Program** - Provides training and technical assistance to low income working families who wish to start their own small business. Call 225-342-5667.
- **Early Childhood Supports and Services** - Provides support and services to young children, ages 0 – 5, and their families who are at risk of developing cognitive, behavioral, and relationship difficulties. Call 225-342-8706.
- **Jobs for America's Graduates LA (JAGS-LA) Program** - Helps keep in school students (age 12 through 22) at risk of failing who face at least two barriers to success which may include economic, academic, personal, environmental, or work related barriers; assists out-of-school youth in need of a high school education; provides an avenue for achieving academically; and assists students in ultimately earning recognized credentials that will make it possible for them to exit school and enter post-secondary education and/or the workforce. Call 225-219-0404.
- **Nurse Family Partnership Program** - Serves low-income, first-time mothers who are no more than 28 weeks pregnant by providing nurse home visitation services beginning early in pregnancy and continuing through the first two years of the child's life. Call 504-219-4749 or 337-898-6097.

- **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)** - Enhances family stability by facilitating links between the particular child/family and community resources/systems through trained, qualified, and supervised advocates who provide skilled communication, necessary transportation, efficient and thorough information gathering, and other services identified in an individual case. Call 504-599-0770.
- **Drug Court Programs** - Combines both treatment and educational components with the ability of a supervising judge to award incentives and sanctions based upon the performance of the clients while in treatment. Treatment is community-based and drug court participants are required to meet with the judge on a regular basis to review progress. Call 504-568-2020.

### How do you apply for assistance?

- Complete the Application for Assistance, form OFS 4APP.
- The Application for Assistance may be completed online and submitted electronically on the DCFS website at [www.dcfs.la.gov](http://www.dcfs.la.gov).
- You may also apply online or pick up a paper application at one of your [local community partners](#).
- Return the completed form to any parish/district DCFS office, if a paper application is completed.
- One form may be used to apply for the CCAP, FITAP, SNAP, and KCSP.
- You may file a separate application for SNAP. Whether you file a SNAP application (paper or online) with another program or separately, your SNAP application will be processed according to the same SNAP procedures, including timeliness, notice, and fair hearing requirements.
- If you file an application for SNAP jointly with another program and are denied benefits from the other program, you do not have to turn in another application for SNAP. You may not be denied SNAP benefits just because you may not be eligible for benefits from another program.
- We will determine your eligibility for all programs for which you apply.
- You need to be interviewed if you are applying for FITAP, SNAP, or KCSP.
- You do not need to be interviewed if you are only applying for CCAP.
- You need to provide verification to the parish/district DCFS office where you apply. Verification is explained below.

If you are applying for:	Complete these pages							
	A1	1-6	7	8	9	10	11-12	13
CCAP		√		√		√		√
FITAP		√	√	√	√		√	√
SNAP	√	√	√	√	√			√
KCSP		√	√	√	√		√	√

### Do you need help completing the application form?

- You may ask someone to help you fill out the form, or
- You may ask the worker during your interview to help you fill out the form.

### What happens after we receive your application form?

- You will be assigned a worker.
- You will be interviewed, if you are applying for FITAP, SNAP, or KCSP. You may receive an appointment letter for a telephone interview.
- You will receive a list of verification that is required.
- Your worker will determine your eligibility within 30 days from the date of application.

- If you have applied for CCAP, you will be sent a CCAP Rate and Availability Verification Form for each child who needs care. You must have the CCAP Rate and Availability Verification Form completed by your child care provider and you must return this form by the due date given. You must also return all requested verification by the due date given. If you are determined eligible, CCAP will make payments to your child care provider on your behalf.
- If you applied for FITAP, you may be required to participate in the Strategies to Empower People (STEP) Program. The STEP Program provides opportunities for work-eligible FITAP families to receive job training, employment, and supportive services to enable them to become self-sufficient.

### **What will we do with the information that you provide?**

- Information you give us on your application form will be verified by federal, state, and local offices including computer cross-matching with other agencies. Someone from our agency may contact other people in order to verify your eligibility for benefits.
- The alien status of household members may be subject to verification through the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and may affect eligibility and benefit amount.
- You will not have to provide immigration status information or documents for any household members who are not eligible because of immigration status and who are not asking for benefits. If a member of your household member does not wish to provide information about his/her citizenship or immigration status, he or she will not be eligible for benefits. Other family or household members may still receive benefits, if they are otherwise eligible. You can apply for and get benefits for eligible household members even if your household includes other members who are not eligible because of immigration status.

### **Why do we need your Social Security Number and are you required to provide it?**

- The collection of information requested on the application form, including Social Security Numbers (SSNs) of household members, is voluntary and authorized under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, (7 U.S.C. 2011-2036), as amended. Failure to provide required information including SSNs for household members will result in that person's ineligibility for SNAP and cash assistance. You will not have to provide Social Security numbers for any household members who are not eligible because of immigration status and who are not asking for benefits.
- SSNs are not required for Child Care Assistance eligibility and eligibility cannot be denied for failure to provide SSNs.
- SSNs are used to:
  - collect information from other sources,
  - check identity of household members,
  - determine whether your household is eligible, and
  - prevent households from getting more benefits than they are entitled to receive.
- SSNs are used in state and federal program reviews, audits, and computer-matching with other agencies such as Louisiana Workforce Commission, Social Security Administration, Internal Revenue Service, etc., through the State Income and Eligibility Verification System.
- Under the Privacy Act of 1974(P.L. 93-579), SSNs may be released for various reasons including those directly connected to the administration of the Child Support Enforcement Program.

### **What type of verification do you need to provide?**

Verification means proof of the information you report. The following table lists the information that must be verified by each program and the examples of the proof that is required. Let your worker know if you have any questions about what you must provide or if you need help in getting the proof. It is our responsibility to help you get the proof that you need.

What Must be Verified and Examples of Proof	SNAP	FITAP (Cash)	KCSP (Cash)	Child Care
<b>Identity</b> – driver's license, work or school ID, ID for health benefits or another social services program, voter's registration card, check stub, or birth certificate	√			
<b>Age/Relationship</b> - birth certificate, baptismal certificate, or hospital birth records of the person to be included. If not your own child, birth records to prove how the child is related to you		√	√	√
<b>Social Security Number</b> - copy of the social security card or papers you received at the hospital for a newborn	√	√	√	
<b>Alien status</b> - if not a U.S. citizen, forms or cards from USCIS that prove the person is a legal alien (unless you choose not to apply for this person)	√	√	√	√
<b>Wages</b> - last 4 pay check stubs or employer's statement for each person who works	√	√	√	√
<b>Self-employment</b> - income tax returns, sales records, quarterly tax records, personal wage record	√	√	√	√
<b>Other income such as contributions, child support, alimony, Social Security, SSI, VA, retirement checks, Unemployment Compensation (UCB)</b> - award letters, court orders, statements from contributors	√	√	√	√
<b>Income that stopped within the last 3 months</b> – pink slip, termination notice, or statement from former employer, termination notice or statement from source of any income that ended	√	√	√	√
<b>Medical expenses</b> - receipts, pharmacy printouts for last 3 months, doctor bills or other papers that show medical expenses for household members who are disabled or over age 59	√			
<b>Child support payments made to someone outside your home</b> - court order or other legal papers and proof that you are making payments such as cancelled checks or wage withholding statements	√			
<b>Immunization</b> - shot, school, or doctor's records		√	√	√
<b>Custody</b> - court order, other legal papers, or provisional custody by mandate			√	
<b>Home</b> - proof of who lives in the home; such as current school records, landlord's written statement or the name and phone number of two people (not related to you) who know your situation		√	√	
<b>School Attendance or Job Training</b> – a statement from the school or job training program indicating the number of hours of the attendance each week and anticipated date of completion for any person who needs child care in order to attend school or job training				√

## Rights and Responsibilities

When you receive benefits from the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, you have certain rights and responsibilities that are explained below. Keep this important information for future reference.

### What are your rights?

- **Non-Discrimination** - In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Under the Food and Nutrition Act and USDA policy, discrimination is also prohibited on the basis of religion or political beliefs.

To file a complaint of discrimination, contact USDA or HHS.

<b>To contact USDA:</b> <b>Write:</b>  USDA, Director Office of Civil Rights Room 326-W, Whitten Building 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250-9410  <b>Call:</b> 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD)	<b>To contact HHS:</b> <b>Write:</b>  HHS, Director Office for Civil Rights Room 506-F 200 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20201  <b>Call:</b> 202-619-0403 (voice) or 202-619-3257 (TDD)
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USDA and HHS are equal opportunity providers and employers.

- **Fair Hearing** - If you do not agree with any decision made on your case, you have the right to ask that your case be reviewed. You can tell us that you want a fair hearing in writing, in person, or by calling the office. You have the right to look at your case record before the hearing.
- **Confidentiality** – All the information you give us is confidential. This means that we cannot give information about your case to other people except under special conditions. Examples of those conditions include official review by other State and Federal agencies or Federal, State and private collection agencies for the collection of claims against SNAP benefits. Information from your case may also be given to law enforcement officials for the purpose of catching persons fleeing to avoid the law and for investigation of a felony or probation/parole violation.
- **Voter Registration** - Any citizen in the State of Louisiana who has met the voter registration requirements and applies for public assistance must be provided the opportunity to register to vote. If you are not registered to vote where you live now, you may indicate that you would like to apply to register to vote on the Application for Assistance. Please note that the information you give to the agency will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes. Applying to register or refusing to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance or services that you may receive from the Department of Children and Family Services. If you would like help filling out the voter registration form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the application form in private. Contact your worker if you need help.

### What are your responsibilities?

- **Cooperation** - You have to cooperate by providing the information we need to determine your eligibility for benefits for you and others for whom you are applying. You also have to provide proof of the information you report. You will be expected to cooperate if a home visit is necessary to determine your eligibility. If your case is selected for a quality control review by state or federal reviewers, you have to cooperate with them.

- Report changes – If you receive SNAP benefits, you must report if your household’s monthly income increases to more than the gross income limit for your household size. This includes reporting the income of a person who moves into your home if that person’s income combined with your SNAP household’s income is more than the gross income limit for your household. These changes must be reported by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month following the month in which the income exceeded the gross income limit. In addition, if you are receiving:
  - FITAP - You have to:
    - Follow the reporting requirements explained in your Family Success Agreement and report these changes within 10 days of your knowledge of the change.
    - Report within 10 days if the only eligible child receiving FITAP benefits moves out of your home.
  - KCSP - You have to report within 10 days if the only eligible child receiving KCSP benefits moves out of your home.
  - Post-FITAP benefits - You have to report within 10 days if you stop working.
  - CCAP - You have to report within 10 days if:
    - Employment, training or education of any parent or adult household member ends or is interrupted for at least 3 weeks.
    - You change child care providers.
    - A child who receives child care benefits moves out of your home.

If you are **not** receiving SNAP benefits, **and are** receiving:

- FITAP, KCSP, or CCAP - You have to report within 10 days if:
  - There is a change in the source of any income received in your household. This includes changes in employers and new sources of income such as child support, Social Security, SSI, etc.
  - The amount of your household’s unearned income changes by more than \$50 per month.
  - The amount of your household’s earned income changes by more than \$100 per month.
  - Someone moves into or out of your household.
  - You move.
- FITAP or KCSP - In addition to the changes listed above, you have to report within 10 days any changes in:
  - School attendance of any 18 year old in your household.
  - Marital status of anyone in your household.
- CCAP - In addition to the changes listed above, you have to report within 10 days if:
  - Employment, training or education of any parent or adult household member ends or is interrupted for at least 3 weeks.
  - Marital status of anyone in your household changes.
  - There is a change in the number of hours worked by any parent or adult household member.
  - You change child care providers or there is a change in the place where care is provided.

- School attendance or attendance in training classes changes for a parent or other adult household member.
- The number of days or hours that children are in child care changes.
- You or anyone in your household has a disability that ends or begins.
- **Pay co-payments** - If you receive CCAP, you have to pay the child care provider the difference between what we pay through CCAP and the amount the provider charges. This is called a co-payment. If you do not keep up-to-date with your co-payments, your CCAP case may be closed. Keep your receipts when you pay the child care provider because we may ask you to prove that you are up-to-date with your co-payments.

## Penalties

If you knowingly report incorrect information, your SNAP benefits, cash assistance, or Child Care Assistance may be denied, reduced, or ended and you may be subject to criminal prosecution.

### What penalties apply in SNAP?

If you do the following:	You will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hide information or give false information</li> <li>● Trade or sell SNAP benefits or EBT cards</li> <li>● Use SNAP benefits to buy ineligible items, such as alcohol or tobacco</li> <li>● Use someone else's SNAP benefits</li> </ul>	Lose your SNAP benefits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 year for the first violation</li> <li>● 2 years for the second violation</li> <li>● Permanently for the third violation</li> </ul> You may also be fined up to \$20,000 or imprisoned for up to 5 years or both.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Trade SNAP benefits for illegal drugs</li> </ul>	Lose your SNAP benefits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2 years for the first violation</li> <li>● Permanently for the second violation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Trade SNAP benefits for firearms, ammunition, or explosives</li> <li>● Trade, buy, or sell SNAP benefits of \$500 or more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lose your SNAP benefits permanently</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give false information about who you are or where you live in order to receive benefits in more than one case at the same time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lose your SNAP benefits for 10 years.</li> </ul>

### What penalties apply in FITAP and KCSP?

If you do the following:	You will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hide information or give false information</li> </ul>	Lose your benefits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 year for the first violation</li> <li>● 2 years for the second violation</li> <li>● Permanently for the third violation</li> </ul> You may also be fined up to \$20,000 or imprisoned for up to 5 years or both.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give false information about where you live in order to receive benefits in two or more states at the same time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lose your benefits for 10 years.</li> </ul>

### What penalties apply in CCAP?

If you do the following:	You will:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hide information or give false information</li> </ul>	Lose your benefits for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 year for the first violation</li> <li>● 2 years for the second violation</li> <li>● Permanently for the third violation</li> </ul>